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ABSTRACT

This document sets out one segment of a comprehensive approach intended to assist institutions of higher education in developing and carrying out alcohol abuse and other drug prevention programs. Social marketing is described as a tool of environmental management, that seeks to produce a specified behavior in a target audience. Intended for a broad campus audience, the brochure examines the development of social marketing and uses 10 campus examples to illustrate ways to popularize positive ideas and attitudes, and encourage favorable changes in social values and individual behavior. Commercial marketing principles, summed up as the four Ps: product, price, place, and promotion, are translated into equivalent elements for use in a social marketing campaign. The report emphasizes the importance of appropriate research and evaluation and recommends that research be focused on four areas: (1) the problem the campaign will address; (2) the audience; (3) the messages; and (4) the communication channels to be used. Since data gathered before a campaign are essential for measuring its impact afterward, it is suggested that the requirements for an evaluation be considered during the planning stage. Appended are a list of resources and estimated costs of a social marketing program. (Contains 11 endnotes.) (BF)

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Social Marketing Strategies

for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems

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The Higher Education Center
for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

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Social Marketing Strategies

for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems

Robert Zimmerman

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Preface

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention was established by the U.S. Department of Education in 1993 to assist institutions of higher education in developing and carrying out alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention programs that will promote campus and community safety and help nurture students' academic and social development.

To accomplish this mission, the Center seeks to increase the capacity of postsecondary schools to develop, implement, and evaluate programs and policies that are built around environmental management strategies. Environmental management means moving beyond general awareness and other education programs to identify and change those factors in the physical, social, legal, and economic environment that promote or abet alcohol and other drug problems.

Clearly, stemming the use of alcohol and other drugs is not something that college administrators alone can achieve. Top administrators, especially presidents, must exercise leadership, but their success will depend ultimately on their ability to build a strong coalition of both on-campus and community interests. The better AOD prevention programs are campuswide efforts that involve as many parts of the college as possible, including students, staff, and faculty. For this reason, the Center emphasizes team-focused training and technical assistance work.

Building coalitions with local community leaders is also key. College campuses do not exist in isolation. AOD prevention planners need to collaborate with local leaders to limit student access to alcohol, prevent intoxication, and support the efforts of local law enforcement. The Center therefore seeks to motivate and train academic leaders to work with local community representatives, while also joining with national organizations that urge local coalitions to increase their outreach to academic institutions.

Specific Center objectives include promoting (1) college presidential leadership on AOD issues; (2) formation of AOD task forces that include community representation; (3) reform of campus AOD policies and programs; (4) a broad reexamination of campus conditions, including academic standards and requirements, the campus infrastructure, and the academic calendar; (5) formation of campus-community coalitions that focus on environmental change strategies; and (6) the participation of individuals from the higher education community in state-level and other associations that focus on public policy. The Center also seeks to increase the capacity of colleges and universities to conduct ongoing process and outcome evaluations of AOD prevention activities, both on campus and in the surrounding community.

This publication represents one piece in a comprehensive approach to AOD prevention at institutions of higher education. The concepts and approaches it describes should be viewed in the broader context of prevention theory and the approaches affirmed by the U.S. Department of Education and promoted by the Center in its training, technical assistance, publication, and evaluation activities.

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Executive Summary

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention promotes multiple prevention strategies that affect the entire campus community. Students do not make decisions about the use of alcohol and other drugs entirely on their own, but rather are influenced by campus social norms and expectancies and by policy decisions affecting the availability of alcohol and other drugs on and off campus, the level of enforcement of regulations and laws, and the availability and attractiveness of alcohol-free social and recreational opportunities.

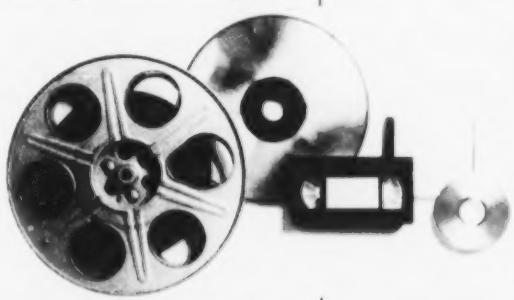
As one piece of its comprehensive approach, the Center has prepared *Social Marketing Strategies for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems.* It is intended for a broad campus audience, such as the members of a campus coalition or task force staff, who might include faculty, alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention coordinators, deans of students, resident life directors, students, law enforcement, and health services. It examines both how social marketing draws on the lessons learned from commercial marketing and how the two differ, and it illustrates, through the experiences of ten colleges and universities, the benefits of a social marketing campaign.

Social marketing utilizes distinctive techniques to bolster the effectiveness of conventional health education and prevention programs. It uses messages and images as carefully developed as those used in commercial advertising, but for a different purpose. Its strategies can popularize positive ideas and attitudes and encourage favorable changes in social values and individual behavior.

Social Marketing Strategies for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems explores how social marketing can be employed to change how students establish patterns of alcohol and other drug use. Social marketing examines the numerous and often subtle pressures to which students respond, making them the basis for prevention strategies. A prevention campaign may take place in a relatively hostile environment—one that encourages consumer indulgence. Social marketers face the challenge of giving comparable appeal to messages that may call for prudence and restraint and consideration of consequences that are not obvious.

How do marketing principles work in a campus prevention program? Commercial marketing's four Ps: product, price, place, and promotion can be seen in successful social marketing campaigns. The *product* may be a change in behavior or support for a new program or policy. The *price* may be breaking with tradition, or giving up a comfortable belief or habit. The *place* is where people can embrace a program or pursue a new course of conduct. *Promotion* is the means used to communicate messages and images justifying the change and making it appealing.

What distinguishes social marketing from more conventional prevention programs is the *marketing* expertise that goes into the *development* of the campaign strategies and messages, plus the careful *evaluation* of the campaign as it is implemented. A social marketing campaign may aim to generate support for a prevention initiative or for a policy change affecting the environment in which alcohol is sold and consumed. But while the ultimate goal of the campaign may be to change individual behavior, that goal may be best pursued by seeking changes in the environment that influences individual behavior.



Communication is the essential tool of social marketing. The information disseminated in a social marketing campaign provides the foundation on which behavioral change is based. The success or failure of a

social marketing effort depends heavily on the research and discipline behind the communication effort. The process of countering widely held beliefs and norms needs frequent repetition to be accepted and to motivate action. A social marketing campaign may, therefore, need an extended period of time—even two to five years—to produce measurable results.

The goals and strategies of a particular social marketing campaign must always be based on the characteristics of a specific target population. Social marketing campaigns succeed by appealing to the existing fundamental values, attitudes, and motivations of the target audience, not by trying to change them.

Social marketing can best facilitate change as part of a strategic plan. Policies and rules involving alcohol and other drugs reflect what governing boards and administrators believe to be appropriate for their students. Social marketing can be employed to publicize the process of setting these policies, explaining why they have been adopted, and stating why they will have a positive effect on the lives of students.

A campaign may be doomed from the start if it is not preceded by careful research. An effective social marketing campaign is based on information specific to one campus and its population or a segment of its population. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups can help provide a picture of the target audience and provide valuable clues to the kind of messages and images that will command attention and appeal to the interests and concerns of those the campaign seeks to influence. Responses to inquiries or questionnaires often reveal common themes and areas of agreement.

Data gathered before a campaign are essential for measuring its impact later; the requirements for an evaluation of a project should be considered in the planning process *before* the campaign begins. All prevention materials should be pretested before they are widely distributed, and it may be appropriate to pretest materials at several stages during their development. Campus groups conducting social marketing campaigns should be prepared to fine-tune their strategies and messages during the course of a campaign, based on feedback from the target audience.

The most compelling prevention message will miss its target unless channels of communication are chosen on the basis of research and pretesting. Using several different channels will continually reinforce the campaign message, increasing the chance that the audience will be exposed to the information often enough to absorb and remember it.

Knowing whom to involve and what level of effort a social marketing campaign takes is of critical importance. A well-thought-out and realistic social marketing campaign can count on valuable allies from the campus community and beyond. If the intention is to create a program that will be sustained from year to year, it is important to establish a cycle of leadership that will provide experience and know-how in the future.

Wide support can be gained by framing the objectives of a campaign in terms of general benefit to the individual or to an entire group. Campus prevention programs rarely command the resources necessary for professional services, purchase of media advertising, and evaluation of programs. Using students as volunteers or paid employees in a prevention effort not only saves money but helps identify the campaign with the student population. Seeking sponsorships or other support in the way of cash or in-kind contributions is another tactic in campaign budgeting.

Social Marketing and Prevention

Social marketing—an approach to seeking a specified behavior in a target audience—can be of great value to alcohol and other drug prevention coordinators, as well as health and student services professionals at colleges and universities. An understanding of social marketing is also important for presidents and other administrative staff seeking to make positive changes in their campus environment.

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention promotes multiple prevention strategies that affect the entire campus community. Effective prevention programs are based on a thorough understanding of the campus environment and its influences on student life. Environmental prevention strategies recognize that students do not make decisions about the use of alcohol and other drugs entirely on their own, but rather are influenced by campus social norms and expectancies, and by policies and procedures laid down by their college or university. Student behavior is influenced by policy decisions affecting the availability of alcohol and other drugs on and off campus, the level of enforcement of regulations and laws, and the availability and attractiveness of alcohol-free social and recreational opportunities.

Experience has shown that simply imparting knowledge about alcohol and other drugs and the risks associated with their use is not likely to lead to a change in either individual or collective student behavior. We cannot expect students to heed prevention messages if we do nothing about environmental influences that may be drawing them in the opposite direction. Public health educators must look at their task as educating people in the broadest possible sense to make personal decisions that will reduce their risk of illness or injury. Social marketing provides distinctive techniques to bolster the effectiveness of conventional health education and prevention programs.

Social marketing borrows its principles and processes selectively from the commercial world. There, products are developed and sold through

Drinking too much alcohol too fast can put a perfectly healthy person into full cardiac arrest. Kids need to know. Make the choice to make a change.

Changing the Social Environment

"It's not enough to change individuals. You have to change the social environment. If we want to convince people to reduce the amount of calories they take in through fat, it's not enough to focus only on the individual's behavior. We have to change the social environment, so that when people go to a supermarket or a restaurant, there are low-fat choices and it is seen as normal behavior."

—William D. Novelli, marketing veteran interviewed in the *Advances* newsletter of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

market research and skillful use of the mass media for advertising and promotion. Commercial marketers know how to make their advertising appeal to consumers. ("Sell the sizzle, not the steak!") They conduct research to learn as much as they can about their potential customers, and they design advertising campaigns directed at those segments of the population most likely to buy their product. They determine the best way to make the product available—retail sales, mail order, door-to-door sales, telemarketing, infomercials on television, and so on. Their marketing strategies are tested through surveys and focus groups. Their sales effort may tell little about the product itself but instead appeal to human desires for social success, intelligence, power, status, and popularity. Marketing images and messages often associate the product with something intangible that people believe they need or want.

The use of such images and messages by the alcohol and tobacco industries is all too familiar. Television commercials give the impression that beer or wine must be served to assure the success of a social event. Beer manufacturers have used images of power to associate their beverage with masculinity and sexual conquest. Advertising for a brand of cigarettes has used the phrase, "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" to link cigarette smoking with the ideal of an emancipated modern woman. Cartoon images such as the notorious Joe Camel have given cigarette advertising an appeal to young people.

Social marketing uses messages and images as carefully developed as those used in commercial advertising, but for a different purpose. Its strategies can popularize positive ideas and attitudes and encourage favorable changes in social values and individual behavior. Social marketing has been used to encourage healthy diets, breast self-examination, family planning, and safer sex.

The following pages explore how social marketing can be employed to bring about changes in the way students establish patterns of alcohol and other drug use. It is clear that imparting information and pointing to the benefits of a certain behavior is only part of the social marketer's task. If a program seeking behavioral change in a campus population is to succeed, the desired behavior must also be supported and maintained by changes in the campus environment. Social marketing can lay the groundwork for changes in policy and social norms that will encourage students to make safe and healthy decisions about their lifestyle. Students begin drinking and using drugs in response to numerous and often subtle pressures. Social marketing examines these influences and makes them the basis for prevention strategies.

The Potential for Change

College and university students are especially vulnerable to environmental influences affecting their use of alcohol and other drugs. There is concern, therefore, that many of these young people may develop impulsive and reckless drinking habits and engage in dangerous drinking games. External influences can reinforce such a taste for bold experimentation. Customs and traditions of long standing on a campus as a whole or in a particular fraternity or sorority may encourage drinking. Alcohol advertising and promotions targeting college-age men and women often abound in neighborhoods surrounding a campus. Surveys have shown that college students on the whole do drink more than their nonstudent peers. A study published by the Harvard School of Public Health found that "binge" drinking (consuming five or more drinks at a sitting for men, four for women) is widespread on American campuses.[1] Student use of alcohol far outdistances use of illegal drugs and is linked to a host of problems affecting the lives of both drinkers and nondrinkers. Although alcohol is clearly the drug of choice on our campuses, a rise in other drug use among young people is expected to have a growing impact on college life as we approach the turn of the

Changing Behavior — What It Takes

People are unlikely to change their behavior—especially if they are comfortable with it—unless certain conditions are met. An expert in behavioral psychology lists eight of those conditions and points out that one or more of them must be present for a person to perform a given behavior:*

- The person forms a strong positive intention or makes a commitment to perform the behavior.
- There are no environmental constraints that make it hard for the behavior to occur.
- The person possesses the skills necessary to perform the behavior.
- The person believes that the advantages (benfits, anticipated positive outcomes) of performing the behavior outweigh the disadvantages (costs, anticipated negative outcomes), producing a positive attitude toward performing the behavior.
- The person perceives more normative pressure to perform the behavior than not to perform the behavior.
- The person perceives that performance of the behavior is consistent with his or her self-image and that it does not violate personal standards.
- The person's emotional reaction to performing the behavior is more positive than negative.
- The person perceives that he or she has the capability to perform the behavior under a number of different circumstances. In other words, the person has "self-efficacy" with respect to executing the behavior in question.

*From Fishbein, M. Developing effective behavior change interventions: Some lessons learned from behavioral research. In Backer, T. E., David, S. K. and Soucy, G. (eds.): *Reviewing the Behavioral Science Knowledge Base on Technology Transfer*. Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1995.

The Four Ps of Marketing

product
price
place
promotion

century. The campus is an environment ripe for the kind of change that social marketing can help bring about.

The Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act (DFSCA) requires colleges and universities to be mindful of their responsibility to help students avoid the risks and problems associated with alcohol and other drug use. The act also requires schools to inform students of laws regarding possession and use of illegal drugs, and policies and rules covering the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on the campus. Institutions of higher learning typically inform students about the health risks of drugs and alcohol and mount programs seeking to discourage students from drinking and driving. They warn students under 21 years of age that it is illegal for them to buy or consume alcohol, and illegal for older students to give them alcoholic beverages. They provide information about sources of counseling or treatment for students whose drinking or drug use is threatening their health or their academic careers.

Such programs are important, because they emphasize that students are responsible for making personal decisions about drinking and using illegal drugs. But those decisions are not made in a vacuum. New students arriving on a campus may encounter traditions and customs indicating that it is appropriate to drink heavily. Students otherwise not inclined to drink may feel pressured to do so by fellow members of fraternities or sororities or other social organizations. Beer companies often sponsor concerts and athletic events and promote their products in ways that give the impression that alcoholic beverages are as harmless as soda or fruit drinks. Businesses in the community surrounding a campus may offer "happy hours" and other attractive incentives for students to drink. When campus prevention programs highlight the risks of alcohol use amid the blare of such inducements to drink, these mixed messages make it difficult for students to make independent choices about alcohol. Clearly, there is a need for imaginative approaches to promoting restraint in such an environment.

How do we put marketing principles to work in a campus prevention program? Experts in marketing products to consumers have done much of our homework for us.

The Four Ps of Marketing

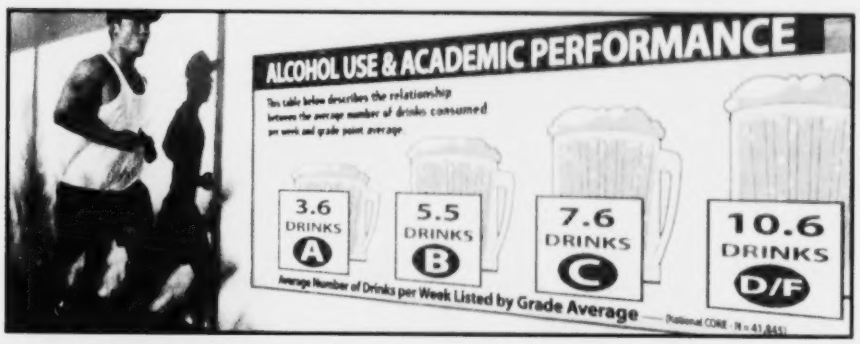
The modern approach to marketing revolves around four Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. Commercial marketers make sure that their product is appealing to consumers and has a catchy name that is easy to remember. They sell it at a price consumers are willing to pay. They make it readily available in an easily accessible place. They use

promotion and advertising to familiarize consumers with the product and persuade them to buy it. These same elements can be seen in successful social marketing campaigns. The *product* may be a change in behavior or support for a new program or policy. The *price* may be breaking with tradition, or giving up a comfortable belief or habit. The *place* is where people can embrace a program or pursue a new course of conduct. *Promotion* is the means used to communicate messages and images justifying the change and making it appealing. Social marketing borrows the methodology of commercial marketing but adapts it to health advocacy and other large-scale efforts for positive social change.

The Four Ps are no more than a convenient framework for envisioning the components of a social marketing campaign. What is important—and what distinguishes social marketing from more conventional prevention programs—is the *marketing* expertise that goes into the *development* of the campaign strategies and messages, plus the careful *evaluation* of the campaign as it is implemented.

Social marketing is often described as a process for leading members of a target audience to change their behavior. But it also recognizes the diversity of the factors that determine the behavior in the first place. Social marketing techniques first of all raise general awareness of the existence of a problem and the conditions creating it, which can be an indispensable first step toward behavioral change. A social marketing campaign may aim to generate support for a prevention initiative or for a policy change affecting the environment in which alcohol is sold and consumed. But while the ultimate goal of the campaign may be to change individual behavior, that goal may be best pursued by seeking changes in the environment that influences individual behavior. Opinions differ as to the exact role social marketing plays among the sometimes unfathomable forces that determine individual and

While a change in individual behavior may be the ultimate goal of a social marketing campaign, it may pursue that goal by seeking changes in the environment that influences individual behavior.


ALCOHOL USE & ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
3.6 DRINKS A
5.5 DRINKS B
7.6 DRINKS C
10.6 DRINKS D/F
Average Number of Drinks per Week Listed by Grade Average

The social marketing project at the University of Arizona was supported by grant number 1 HD1 SPO 6343 from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the program and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

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The Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Program in California sought over a period of years to persuade people to change their behavior and thus reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease.

group behavior. Social research may eventually give us a clearer understanding of how knowledge and persuasion and group dynamics combine with personal interests to influence decision making.

A classic example of social marketing on a major scale is the Stanford University Heart Disease Prevention Program in California, which sought over a period of years to persuade people to change their behavior and thus reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease. Face-to-face instruction was combined with newspaper stories, television and radio shows, and printed materials disseminating information about the causes of heart disease and encouraging changes in the target population's tobacco use, diet, exercise, and other habits. Individuals aged 12 to 74 in the target population were surveyed every two years for eight years to measure the program's impact. Members of the target group had a 15 percent lower risk of heart disease than a control group not exposed to the program.

In the Stanford program, the *product* being marketed was a lifestyle likely to have a favorable impact on blood pressure, weight, cholesterol levels, and other physical factors associated with heart disease. These health benefits constituted an acceptable *price* for persons who would have to change comfortable but unhealthy habits to reduce their risk. At-risk individuals were offered information and assistance at a convenient *place*, through one-on-one meetings at home or at neighborhood group meetings. Messages through a variety of local communication channels provided *promotion* of the desired change in behavior.

College campuses offer a broad spectrum of potential *products* of social marketing, for example, increased patronage at alcohol-free social events, or a reduction in binge drinking. Health benefits and improved scholastic performance are benefits that occur at an acceptable *price* for reducing one's alcohol consumption. A coffeehouse or other popular spot offering nonalcoholic beverages may provide the *place* where the product is found. Changes in drinking behavior can be *promoted* through a variety of media, from campus newspapers to

messages on soft drink cups and refrigerator magnets.

Communication is the essential tool of social marketing. The information disseminated in a social marketing campaign provides the foundation on which behavioral change is based. Members of the target audience must be made aware of a benefit that will result from the change, thus motivating them to adopt and sustain a new behavior. The new behavior must be consistent with the person's self-image and personal standards. Social marketing on the surface may resemble a conventional advertising or mass media campaign—clever slogans, newspaper ads and stories, eye-catching images on posters. But that resemblance is only superficial. The success or failure of a social marketing effort depends heavily on the research and discipline behind the communication effort.

Goals, Targets, and Messages

Three of the most important aspects of social marketing are

- adopting realistic and measurable goals
- knowing the target population
- testing messages and materials

Northern Illinois University

One of the most closely studied campaigns based on perceptions of the norm was carried out at Northern Illinois University. A student survey laid the groundwork by revealing that fewer than half the students had engaged in binge drinking in the previous two weeks, although the survey respondents thought more than two out of three students on campus were binge drinkers.

The NIU Health Enhancement Services set about to correct this misconception. First, it was determined through another survey that the campus newspaper ranked highest with students as a source of information. Focus groups and student surveys determined the kind of presentations in the print media that would attract attention and be regarded as authoritative. News stories and advertisements were then placed in the campus *Northern Star* to convey the message that the majority of NIU students do not indulge in binge drinking when they party.

To help students retain this information, two student workers dressed in trench coats and sunglasses, like the characters in the movie *The Blues Brothers*, approached students in cafeterias and asked if they knew the true rate of heavy drinking among students. Those who knew it received a dollar, and those who didn't received an information flyer.

Other aspects of the campaign included putting information about drinking norms in the *Get Acquainted* packet distributed during the first week of classes, and offering $5 to students who put up a campaign poster on their wall. After the campaign, follow-up surveys showed that students' perception of the drinking norm had moved closer to reality, and that the extent of binge drinking on the NIU campus had declined as well.

CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

A social marketing campaign may need an extended period of time—even two to five years—to produce measurable results.

Adopting Realistic and Measurable Goals

For students over the age of 21, alcoholic beverages are legal and are often consumed in a manner that presents no risk to their health and safety. A campaign perceived as an attack on alcohol *per se* can therefore be divisive and misunderstood. Planners must identify actual problems and risks associated with the unrestrained use of alcohol and other drugs and direct their efforts to reducing or eliminating those problems and risks.

64% of U of A students have
4
or fewer drinks when they party
*Based on survey data collected by Campus Health Service (1997) from 270 U of A students in a randomly selected mailing. Funded by the US Dept. of Health & Human Services.

The social marketing project at the University of Arizona was supported by grant number 1 HD1 SP0 6343 from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the program and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Research has shown, for example, that students often believe heavy drinking is expected on their campus. They drink heavily because they think "everybody" does. Social marketing campaigns have therefore sought to show that actual drinking rates are much lower than the perceived norm. When students are informed of the gap between their estimates and the actual rates of alcohol consumption, "binge" drinking and the problems that flow from it appear to decline.[4] If a campus population is unaware of the link between alcohol consumption and such problems as acquaintance rape and other acts of violence, that information can become the basis of a social marketing campaign directed at creating student acceptance of restraint in the way alcohol is made available at social events.

A social marketing campaign may need an extended period of time—even two to five years—to produce measurable results. The process of countering widely held beliefs and norms needs frequent repetition to be accepted and to motivate action. A fifth P might be added to the marketing formula in this case: *persistence*. Traditions that make heavy alcohol consumption synonymous with campus socializing are deeply rooted. Prevention workers may need yet another P—*patience*—to see new traditions take the place of the old.

More Ps

persistence

patience

Knowing the Target Population

Social marketing campaigns are not a one-size-fits-all technique. The goals and strategies of a particular social marketing campaign must always be based on the characteristics of a specific target population. Messages and images used in social marketing

communications must reflect the values and interests of those they are designed to influence.

The student body at a small, private liberal arts college in New England is quite different from, say, the student body of a large state university in the West. Students who commute to classes at an urban community college may respond to messages that are inappropriate and ineffective for students in a small college town.

Even the same college contains diverse populations: students living in campus residence halls, and students who live off campus; youthful freshmen just beginning their college years, and more mature seniors and graduate students who are veterans of campus life; members of Greek-letter fraternities and sororities, and students who shun these associations; students who see outstanding athletes as role models, and those who look elsewhere for inspiration. Social marketing campaigns may be directed only toward members of the freshman class, or only toward students who are under 21 years of age. A campaign may focus on students living in campus residence halls, or on patrons of off-campus gathering places. How and where students live, how they choose to spend their time outside classes, the tastes and values that affect their behavior—all such information is important to the planners of social marketing campaigns. The characteristics of the target audience will dictate key aspects of the campaign—its goal, the content and style of messages, and the way they are delivered.

The characteristics of the target audience will dictate key aspects of the campaign—its goal, the content and style of its messages and the way they're delivered.

Social marketing campaigns succeed by appealing to the existing fundamental values, attitudes, and motivations of the target audience, not by trying to change them. A campaign should produce incentives for a change of behavior based on an appeal to these preexisting values. A reduction in binge drinking might be the goal, for example, but the campaign would appeal to the concern of students for their personal safety.

Testing Messages and Materials

Prevention planners may be impressed by a catchy name for a prevention-oriented campus event or by striking images for prevention posters. But do these words and images convey the intended meaning when they are seen by college freshmen? By seniors? By men? By women? Social marketing calls for surveys, interviews, and focus groups to ensure that the target audience will interpret the messages and materials as intended and will respond as expected.

Social Marketing as Part of a Strategic Plan

A social marketing campaign that concentrates solely on appeals to change individual behavior may have disappointing results. Alcohol and other drug problems are the product of a variety of environmental forces that influence personal decisions. Social marketing recognizes that changes in behavior require the support of an environment that makes the new behavior an acceptable choice, so that the *cost* of the change can be balanced against a perceptible *benefit*. An important environmental factor affecting student drinking is the availability of alcohol, both on and off campus, and this factor often depends on institutional policies and off-campus practices and influences.

Institutional Policies

Policies and rules involving alcohol and other drugs reflect what governing boards and administrators believe to be appropriate for their students. However, those policies and rules do not necessarily reflect what is happening on a campus. Although policies may comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act, their influence on the reality of campus life can depend on how the policies are perceived by staff, faculty, and students and the degree to which they are enforced. Are they realistic and fair? Do they call for appropriate consequences for violations? Are they widely disseminated and understood? Do staff members support the policies, and are they willing to enforce them? Do students have a voice in creating policies or changing them? It can be the task of the social marketer to create support for such policies by helping to ensure that a majority of students understand the reason for their existence and accept them as being in their best interests.

Experience has demonstrated the importance of student participation in the development or review of campus policies on alcohol and other drugs.[5] Social marketing can be employed to publicize the process of setting these policies, explaining why they have been adopted and stating why they will have a positive effect on the lives of students. Social marketing messages can make clear that such policies are not designed just to control the behavior of students but arise from genuine concern for their welfare and educational attainment. Some students may be motivated to abuse alcohol or other drugs as a gesture of rebellion against adult authority. Failing to involve students in the policy-setting process may fuel this motivation. Also, policies can be effective only if they are well publicized and strictly and fairly enforced. Students are keenly aware of double standards that demand higher

standards of conduct from students than they do from faculty and staff. Eliminating this cause for grievance can reduce student resistance to campus policies.

Social marketing provides tools for understanding the campus culture surrounding alcohol and other drug use. Prevention planners need to know how the traditions, organization, and physical structure of an institution may contribute to or reinforce substance use. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups can shed light on student perceptions and attitudes, and can suggest policy changes that will have a beneficial effect on their behavior. At one college, students indicated in a survey that they visited off-campus drinking spots on weekends because they were bored if they stayed on the campus. In response, the administration began sponsoring weekend entertainment on campus. Student surveys indicating that many students are concerned about health and physical fitness have led health educators on some campuses to fold their alcohol and other drug programs into a broader "wellness" program. Thus, a change in drinking behavior is based on a positive personal benefit.

Policies permitting the sale and service of alcohol on campus are popular and deeply rooted at many colleges and universities. Proposing changes in them may incite controversy. Social marketers should be alert for ways to reduce problems associated with alcohol consumption while respecting long-standing traditions involving alcohol service. A trouble prevention strategy can seek to train bartenders to check IDs and cut off service to anyone who appears to be intoxicated. Rules can be laid down to control attendance at unsupervised keg parties that offer no barrier to underage drinking. Policies can ensure that food and nonalcoholic drinks are available at all events where alcohol is served. A policy eliminating or limiting the sale of alcohol in stadiums can reduce the rowdiness and violence associated with athletic events. A case can be made for eliminating sponsorship by alcoholic beverage companies of athletic events heavily attended by students under 21 years of age. A social marketing campaign can help create support for such policies by drawing attention to the problems that they can be expected to reduce or eliminate.

Social marketing by itself cannot change policies or make new ones, but it can help build support for policy decisions that significantly affect student life. If such changes in policy are likely to generate controversy in the campus community, social marketing can help make the changes more palatable by linking them to a benefit widely shared by the campus population.

Media Advocacy and Policy Change

Policies affecting patterns of alcohol consumption on and off a campus are usually determined by governing boards or elected bodies sensitive to popular opinion. A media advocacy campaign can call public attention to a policy or policies that are affecting rates of alcohol consumption or creating at-risk drinking situations on or off campus, and can point up the benefits of a policy change. Through the social marketing process of research, development, and implementation, a proactive media advocacy campaign can put a policy issue in the public eye and persuade a policymaking body to take action.

Media advocacy calls for the creative use of information and images to obtain news coverage as a means of generating support for a proposed policy change. News coverage can often carry a prevention message more effectively than advertisements or public service announcements. Media advocacy can become an integral part of a social marketing campaign that seeks policy change by reinforcing the message promoting healthy decision making by individuals.

The value of incorporating media advocacy into a social marketing campaign for alcohol and other drug prevention is to bring about a change in policies that govern the conditions under which individuals develop patterns in relation to the use of alcohol and other drugs. Issues are "framed" in media coverage to dramatize the impact of an existing policy or a proposed policy change. Proposing that alcohol should no longer be sold at campus athletic events, for instance, would be framed for discussion as a safety issue rather than as a departure from long-standing campus tradition. Media advocates would marshal facts on drinking/driving arrests after athletic events to counter arguments that spectators should have a right to buy and consume alcohol. Newspaper reporters and television news teams are more likely to cover stories about prevention issues if there is an element of conflict between the parties concerned. Media advocacy campaigns employ op-ed commentaries and letters to the editor to present facts that bolster their case.

Campus organizations seeking a common goal may form coalitions to engage in media advocacy. For example, fraternities and sororities eager to reduce insurance costs are natural allies of health advocates concerned about lax observance of rules controlling alcohol service at student parties. The media are more likely to pay attention if groups that would normally not work together are seeking a change in a public policy.

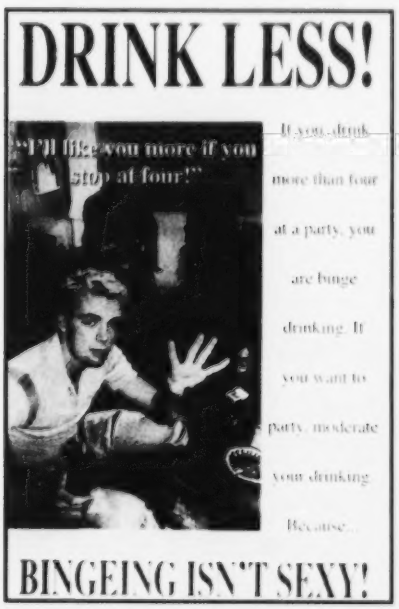
Media advocacy may carry students or prevention staff into public confrontations with policymakers or advocates of an opposing point of view. Social marketing planners and others concerned with the particular institution's image should carefully consider whether it is worth engaging in public controversy over a prevention issue. For instance, if a demonstration or picketing is appropriate to provide the visual element that a television crew is seeking for a news story, care must be taken to avoid the charge that students are being exploited for the sake of publicity.

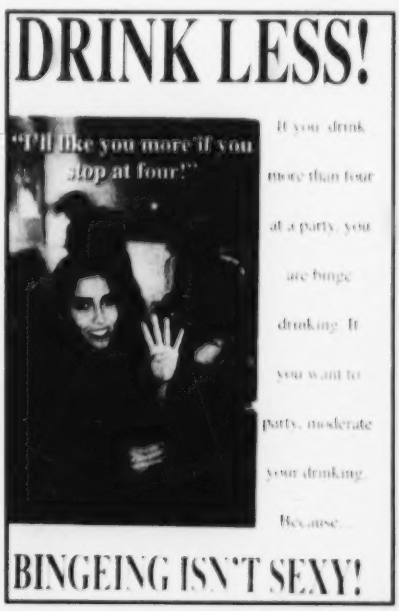
For more information see *Raising More Voices than Mugs: Changing the College Environment Through Media Advocacy*, available from the Higher Education Center.

Influences from off Campus

Students bring to their college years a lifetime of exposure to television commercials and other advertising that is unlikely to have instilled in them an appreciation of the risks associated with alcoholic beverages. Many students are thus primed to become eager participants in the campus drinking scene. The Harvard study cited earlier found that more students begin binge drinking in high school than in college. It also reported that binge drinkers are the most likely to have used other drugs. The music scene continues to glamorize illegal drug use, and adolescents in the 1990s perceive marijuana as less dangerous than young people in the 1980s did.[5] These outside influences must be taken into account when considering social marketing and prevention strategies.

Bars and other student hangouts around a campus can exert a powerful influence on social norms. Campus policies seeking to prevent underage drinking can hardly be effective if the adjacent community is lax in enforcing underage drinking laws. By the same token, lax policies on campus can allow rowdiness by drinking students to disturb the surrounding community. Campus prevention programs may seek alliances with Responsible Hospitality Councils or other organizations in the off-campus community for campaigns that seek changes in business


DRINK LESS!
"I'll like you more if you stop at four!"
If you drink more than four at a party, you are binge drinking. If you want to party, moderate your drinking. Because...
BINGEING ISN'T SEXY!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Jonathan Chauvin, Andrew Kanas, Valerie Moberg, and Alexander Walk apply "classical conditioning" theory in UCSB's Comm 117 "Persuasion" class.

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practices affecting the sale and service of alcohol to students. A social marketing campaign's posters, advertisements, and other communication materials may need to be circulated beyond the campus to have the desired impact on students. At the same time, the campaign can awaken the off-campus population to its own responsibilities in helping the campaign succeed. Social marketers working to change the drinking behavior of students may find valuable support in a community informed that it has a part to play in creating, and can benefit from, a safe and healthy environment for students.

The Social Marketing Process: How It Works

The success or failure of a social marketing campaign may be determined well before the campaign itself begins. A campaign may be doomed from the start if it is not preceded by careful research. Research for a social marketing campaign focuses on four areas:

- the problem that a campaign will address
- the audience that will be the target of the campaign
- the messages to be directed at the audience
- the channels of communication that will carry the messages

Understanding the Problem

Research published in academic and professional journals can provide information about problems associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs by college students. The Harvard study cited earlier is an example. Such studies are useful in identifying problems and issues affecting the nation's student population as a whole, but they are no substitute for surveys and research about the extent and nature of alcohol problems on a particular campus. An effective social marketing campaign is based on information specific to one campus and its population or a segment of its population.

Here are some questions that can help in the planning stage of a social marketing campaign:

What is the problem to be addressed? How many people are affected by it, and how? Are they aware that the problem affects them? Are policymakers and others in responsible campus positions aware of the problem? Have efforts been made in the past to reduce the problem? What can be learned from those efforts? What new steps could help reduce or eliminate the problem? Who must be involved in these steps?

If the problem involves alcohol, where and how are alcoholic beverages made available? How are they

promoted? Where and when does drinking take place? How many bars are within a mile of the campus? Do nearby drinking spots advertise in college papers? Are beer companies contributing to student organizations or school departments? Are there campus traditions that encourage drinking? Could new rules and policies—or better enforcement of existing rules and policies—make the campus environment less conducive to drinking patterns that cause problems for students?

The better we understand a problem, the better we can target corrective measures. A thorough grasp of the situation will help determine whether a social marketing campaign is an appropriate way to address it and what the goal of the campaign should be. Knowing the anatomy of the problem can ensure that a campaign is directed at the appropriate audience and has specific, attainable objectives.

Knowing the Target Audience

The target audience in a social marketing campaign usually consists of people whose perceptions, attitudes, and behavior are associated with the problem or problems that have been identified. The target audience may be the entire campus community, including administration, faculty, and staff. It may be the freshman class and other new students arriving at the beginning of the school year. It may be spectators at athletic events. It

University of Portland

The University of Portland engaged an outside advertising agency, which used a survey of drinking practices and perceptions, as well as focus groups and pretested materials, to design and implement a campaign that introduced a campus mystery about the meaning of the numbers "70-30." After a saturation media campaign using the campus newspaper, radio station, and banners and posters, the meaning of the numbers was revealed: 70 percent of students either didn't drink alcohol or drank fewer than five drinks on a single occasion, compared with 30 percent who engaged in binge drinking. This information then became the basis for the next phase of the campaign, using the slogan "The party's not as big as you think." Students reporting to a tent erected on the campus received two free tickets to a concert if they could say what "70-30" meant.

Set a new example. Let your kids know the reward for hard work comes in lots of different cans. Make the choice to make a change.

may be patrons at an establishment where alcohol is served.

Surveys, interviews, and focus groups can help provide a picture of the target audience and provide valuable clues to the kind of messages and images that will command attention and appeal to the interests and concerns of those the campaign seeks to influence. Information about the target audience is important not only for planning the campaign but also for designing communication materials and determining later whether a campaign has had the desired results.

Social marketing can help mobilize support for policy changes by targeting audiences affected by an alcohol- or other drug-related problem but whose behavior is not the

Walla Walla College
University of California

The University of California at Santa Barbara used the slogan "Just the Facts" in a drinking-norm campaign. After stories appeared in the campus newspaper regarding the true extent of heavy drinking on campus, campaign workers offered students on the street a dollar if they had read the newspaper story and could recall the facts. Walla Walla College in Washington used the number 86 as the centerpiece of its drinking-norm campaign. A survey found that only 14 percent of students had used alcohol in the previous month, whereas 86 percent had not. For five days the number 86 appeared without explanation on banners, table-tents in cafeterias, door-hangers in residence halls, bookmarks at the library, windshield flyers in parking lots—even in paint on the snow. Finally, students were given a telephone number to call to find out what 86 referred to. A recorded message gave callers the facts about the campus drinking norm.

CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

La Salle University

Campus populations generally are tuned in to the latest in popular culture. Keeping abreast of changes in taste in entertainment and recreation is a priority for planners of social marketing campaigns. At Philadelphia's La Salle University, for instance, an alcohol-free dance club called Backstage flourished in the 1980s, offering "mocktails" at the bar and scheduling events to help popularize non-alcoholic beverages. Not so in the 1990s. Today, spending time at coffeehouses is in. This trend is reflected in La Salle's addition of a coffee bar called Life's Perks to the Backstage venue. Along with the variety of coffee brews served at Life's Perks, Backstage offers movies, televised sports events, stand-up comics, and live music. Backstage is not explicitly promoted as an alcohol-free environment for student recreation. "We market the entertainment—not the fact that there's no alcohol there," says Joy Verner of La Salle's Student Life Office.

cause of it. For example, people who realize their health is threatened by "secondhand smoke" often become a powerful source of support for new laws limiting cigarette smoking in public places and the workplace. On campus, surveys have revealed the extent of "secondhand binge" effects—property damage, interrupted sleep, and other problems endured by persons who drink little or not at all but are disturbed by the heavy drinking of others.[7] These students provide a valuable base of support for efforts to reduce heavy drinking.

Here are some tips for identifying and gathering information about a target audience:

- People in target audiences may have diverse origins and interests, but they share many values and attitudes that are important when creating program strategies. Responses to inquiries or questionnaires often reveal common themes and areas of agreement.

- A campaign may have both a primary and a secondary target audience. For example, students who drink may be the primary audience of a campaign. Those who serve alcohol in bars and restaurants on and near the campus may be a secondary target audience. Counselors and others in a position to discuss alcohol use with individual students may be another target.

- Interviews may touch on sensitive, personal subjects. Questions should be framed carefully to elicit candid answers. Emphasizing the anonymity of responses can help make subjects comfortable with the interview.

The Right Strategy

Research and planning should result in a strategy clearly understood by those working on the campaign. A written summary of the strategy circulated to all participants can be helpful in clarifying the mission. The strategy statement should encompass the following:

- the program objectives
- the primary and secondary audiences
- the information to be communicated
- the benefit as perceived by the audience

The attitudes and behavior that social marketing seeks to change are often ingrained habits or have emotional significance that makes them hard to change. For this reason the social marketer appeals to other attitudes and preferences that can overcome the target audience's resistance. A person who believes that the only worthwhile social life is found at his or her favorite drinking spot must be shown that admirable people congregate and have fun in places where there is little or no drinking. An anti-smoking message based on a threat to health many years in the future is not likely to impress a young person who enjoys smoking or identifies smoking with being cool. However, emphasizing that cigarettes leave a smoker with an unpleasant mouth odor makes smoking an issue tied to personal hygiene and acceptance by the opposite sex—powerful motivators in most young people.

A prevention campaign may take place in a relatively hostile environment—one dominated by tobacco and alcohol advertising that encourages consumer indulgence. Social marketers face the challenge of giving comparable appeal to messages that may call for prudence and restraint and consideration of consequences that are not obvious. While scare tactics generally are considered to be of doubtful value, a well-designed campaign can raise awareness of a problem and encourage members of the campus community to start thinking about their own decisions and behavior in a new way.

A personal decision to change a drinking pattern may be daunting to a person highly sensitive to the perceived opinions of others. Younger students often do not want to be regarded as being different from their peers. They want to belong. One of the social marketer's tasks is to establish a value in belonging to a group

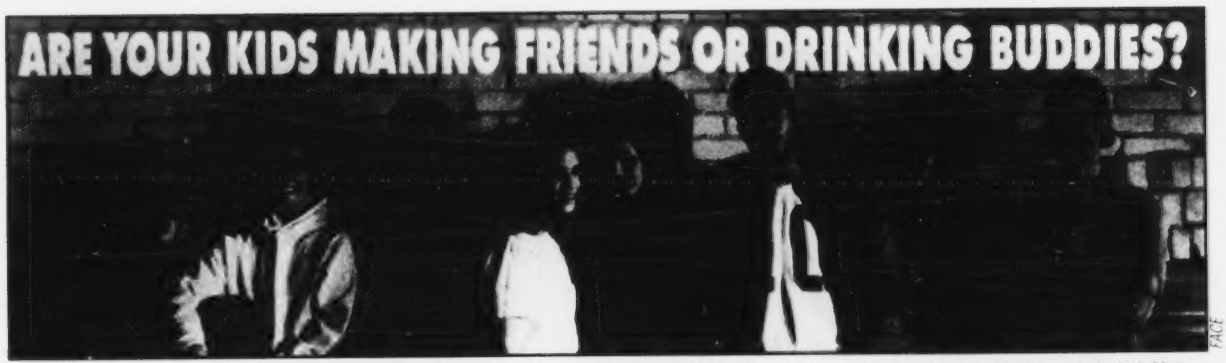
Central Missouri State
St. John's University in Minnesota

At Central Missouri State University, prevention planners noted that David Letterman's late-night television show was highly popular with students. They borrowed a staple of the Letterman show to form the centerpiece of their campaign: "The Top Ten Reasons Not to Drink Before Finals," arrayed in reverse order of importance. At St. John's University in Minnesota, prevention planners observed that country and western music was edging up in popularity among students. As a test, a c&w group was booked for an alcohol-free concert on campus. The concert outdrew competing concerts at which beer was available. Now, an alcohol-free c&w concert is an annual event on the St. John's campus.

CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

that shuns a harmful activity. Like conventional health education, social marketing provides information about the benefits of certain behavior. But social marketing goes beyond classroom lectures by creating a supportive social environment conducive to a positive change in behavior.

Commercial advertising often plays on a person's insecurities, desires, and aspirations. Products or services are "positioned" to meet those needs as soon as the consumer makes the decision to buy. A successful strategy will offer a benefit in immediate view at a price the target buyer is willing to pay. Bear in mind that the benefit campaign planners see—improved health or reduction of risk—may not be the same as the benefit being offered to members of the target audience. A campaign may aim to reduce drinking and driving by young people. Rather than basing a campaign on tedious exhortations about safety from injury or possible death in a traffic crash, though, the social marketer might find that a warning about the threat to students' driving privileges under new "zero tolerance" laws would have more impact. Many states have adopted laws mandating that drivers under 21 will have their licenses suspended if they are found to be driving with any measurable amount of alcohol in their systems.



Kids drink to fit in. And millions of them are getting drunk, getting sick, getting hurt, and getting killed. Find out what's going on with kids and alcohol. Make the choice to make a change.

University of Illinois

A campaign on the Urbana campus of the University of Illinois set about to deglamorize abusive alcohol consumption and spread the word about alternatives to heavy drinking. A survey established that students were interested in avoiding the negative consequences of drinking. A faculty member from the university's speech communications department helped design a questionnaire distributed to 150 students in communication classes, and the survey revealed that they believed academic success, health status, and social life were the issues most likely to be affected by excessive alcohol use.

The next step was to choose students who could serve as role models in media messages designed to reinforce the beliefs of students about the impact of heavy drinking on their health, social life, and academic record. Because of the popularity of Big Ten Conference sports on the campus, student athletes filled the bill. When sample messages with the theme **"Consider the Alternatives"** were shown to focus groups, the campaign planners found that only two of the issues identified in their earlier survey—health status and social life—actually struck a chord with students. Most of the focus group participants believed academic success was threatened for only the heaviest drinkers, and the proposed media messages were modified to reflect these findings. Athletes were interviewed to generate quotes for the ads, and information was gathered about alcohol-free weekend social activities that deserved promotion.

An experience with one proposed ad illustrates the importance of adequate review of media messages. The ad suggested that heavy drinking by women exposed them to greater risk of acquaintance rape, an issue brought forth by women in focus groups. A review of the ad by the student affairs staff led to the conclusion that there was a subtle "blame the victim" message in the ad if it failed to note also that heavy drinking by men was an equally important factor in rape and other violence. A new version of the ad made its point about alcohol and violence without being gender-specific.

The ads ran in Friday editions of the student newspaper, each with catchy text about heavy drinking's impact on health, safety, and social life; a list of alcohol-free events scheduled for the upcoming weekend; and a picture of an athlete with quotes on how he or she deals with an alcohol issue. Attendance at two of the listed alcohol-free events increased significantly after the advertisements appeared.

CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

The Right Message

Social marketing messages can turn the tables on those who are promoting or encouraging a practice that the campaign wants to change or eliminate. Advertising for alcohol and tobacco, for instance, invariably features attractive models to depict the use of these products—a suggestion that smoking or drinking brings with it popularity and success. A social marketing campaign can make a counterargument by presenting images of people who are popular and successful without smoking or drinking. The "Be Smart. Don't Start!" campaign sponsored by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the mid-1980s used only four words to associate the decision not to use alcohol or other drugs with a quality young people aspire to—being smart. Although "Be Smart. Don't Start!" was aimed at children, it demonstrates how a simple slogan can give a *positive* spin to an appeal *not* to use drugs.

The Marlboro man—a familiar image around the world—associates the rugged, free life of the cowboy with a brand of cigarettes. Social marketers, on the other hand, can make the point that true independence and freedom come from resisting and rejecting appeals to conform to an advertiser's misleading pitch for a product. In response to advertising associating smoking with a "liberated" lifestyle for women, social marketing can make the point that women demonstrate their freedom better by choosing not to smoke.

Messages based on long-term consequences of use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs are known to have a limited effect on the behavior of young people, even when presented in a credible way.[7] Adolescents and young adults take good health for granted, and many view the serious long-term consequences of heavy substance use as too distant and too unlikely to be of concern to them. Young people often see their peers use drugs and not become addicted. They simply fail to grasp the probabilities of dependency and other long-term damage that go along with an individual's use of drugs.[8]

A prevention message emphasizing long-term risks of heart disease and cancer from cigarette smoking is thus unlikely to influence young smokers. What will get their attention are messages emphasizing readily noticeable effects of tobacco use—discoloration of teeth, body and mouth odor, loss of concentration and appetite, deterioration of physical performance. The "Nic, a Teen" program of the federal Office of Smoking and Health carries the message that smoking makes one unattractive to desirable members of the other sex.

Messages based on fear should be used cautiously, if at all. Research has indicated that campaigns based on fear are difficult to carry out and may

Messages based on fear should be used cautiously, if at all.

actually be counterproductive by appealing to risk taking in some members of the target audience. If the threat is too remote in time or too mild, people will not be motivated by it. If the threat is too strong, people may tune out the message, refuse to believe it, or adopt a fatalistic attitude.

Fear is most successful as a motivator when it is linked with advice on how to avoid the danger or protect oneself from it. [10]

A cautionary note: focus group participants usually rate strong fear appeals as highly motivating and effective. But this is true even when later studies show that those appeals were ineffective.

Campaign spokespersons should be chosen for their perceived trustworthiness, credibility, and attractiveness. Celebrities should be used with caution, as their presence may overwhelm the message itself. Perceptions of entertainment and sports stars can change very quickly, and a celebrity can suddenly become newsworthy in negative ways that undermine a campaign.

Does the Message Work?

All prevention materials should be pretested before they are widely distributed. It may be appropriate to pretest materials at several stages during their development. Three methods are suggested:

Focus group interviews can obtain in-depth information about beliefs, perceptions, language, interests, and concerns of a target audience. These exploratory group sessions are usually conducted with a group of eight to ten people. A moderator leads the group through a discussion outline designed to learn about the audience's beliefs, attitudes, and language. Focus groups are especially valuable in developing concepts for prevention messages. They provide valuable insights into beliefs about and attitudes toward the issue the prevention campaign will address.

Individual interviews can probe for an individual's responses and beliefs, by telephone or in person. Such interviews offer an opportunity to test sensitive or emotional materials and are best conducted by a trained interviewer.

Intercept interviews at a central location on campus may not be statistically representative of the campus population, but they can provide a sample larger than those used in focus groups or individual in-depth interviews. Questionnaires used in

intercept interviews contain primarily multiple-choice or closed-ended questions to permit quick responses.

Questions asked during pretesting should be designed to reveal whether the audience understands the central message, believes the message bearer, and finds the message personally relevant. Pretesting can help planners avoid spending time and money on materials that will not do the job.

People in focus groups should be chosen from the segment of the target audience that the prevention message is designed to reach.

Focus groups should comprise eight to ten people, chosen from the segment of the target audience that the prevention message is designed to reach. Students can be recruited from an organization, a particular residence hall, fraternities and sororities, or customers of a particular entertainment spot. They can be chosen at random from students passing at a campus corner known for its heavy traffic. Feedback from focus groups and interviews can ensure that a prevention message "speaks the language" of the target audience.

Focus groups' reactions can be noted and summarized by the person conducting the session, while participants may also be asked to fill out a short written questionnaire exploring their responses to the message being

Colorado State

Colorado State University used a drinking-norm survey in a different way. Armed with a finding that 30 percent of students did not drink alcohol at all, the school's Center for Alcohol and Drug Education chose to focus its campaign on incoming students. Diverse students among the nondrinking 30 percent were recruited to appear in a video depicting their rewarding participation in campus activities without the use of alcohol. The students in the video were invited to explain why they chose not to drink; their reasons ranged from the presence of an alcohol problem in their families to the belief that drinking might interfere with their own athletic or academic goals. The video was shown to prospective students and their parents and as part of orientation programs for new students in residence halls.

Says Maureen Conway, director of the Center for Drug and Alcohol Education at Colorado State: "We're currently looking at creating a new video every year because of the secondary gains we found in the first year. Valuing students who make healthy choices, giving them an opportunity to meet each other, and giving them recognition furthers the goal of empowering the non-using group to affect campus norms. Our hope is that this yearly process can create status and acceptance of health and wellness for students who are making critical decisions around safety, substances, and risk-taking."

CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

St. John's University
St. Benedicts

Focus groups helped lay the groundwork for an ambitious project to change the character of an annual campus festival at St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota, neighboring schools for men and women, respectively. The project successfully sold a new "product"—a weekend of alcohol-free entertainment and social events conceived as a substitute for an annual "Watab" festival known as a drinking free-for-all on a September weekend. The success of the project, says a campus counselor, put to rest the widely held notion that the only way students could make social contacts was by joining in marathon beer-drinking during Watab.

Health Advocates, a peer educator group working on the two campuses, enlisted two other student groups, the Joint Events Council and the Cultural Affairs Board, to help plan and organize an event that would dramatize alternatives to drinking as part of the collegiate experience. Near the end of the spring semester, they organized four groups of about 25 students, each drawn from all academic levels on the SJU and CSB campuses. The group meetings became brainstorming sessions for ideas for entertainment and events that could be expected to attract participation even if no drinking was the order of the day.

What evolved the following September was Lolla-No-Booza, a four-day event of concerts, dances, races, and games billed as "vomit free" to contrast them with the frequent result of drinking too much beer. Students willing to sign a no-alcohol pledge for the weekend were given a tangible reminder of their commitment: a decorated cup that entitled them to unlimited refills of free nonalcoholic beverages at any of the businesses on the two campuses. Although a few students turned up under the influence of alcohol at the weekend events, their presence only drew attention to the fact that the norm at this event was abstinence. The success of the first Lolla-No-Booza led to a second staging of the event a year later. Attendance doubled to nearly 1,000 students. This no-alcohol event, says Dan Casey, a counselor at St. John's, appears to be on its way to replacing a heavy-drinking weekend as a campus tradition and serves as a running start toward a standard of moderation in drinking during the rest of the school year.

tested. It is important to be alert for indications that words or concepts in the material were not fully understood by a significant number of persons in the group. Also, focus groups may reveal interests or concerns that were not fully understood by those planning the campaign strategy or designing the materials.

How Is the Message Carried?

The most compelling prevention message will miss its target unless channels of communication are chosen on the basis of research and pretesting. For example, a campus newspaper often stands at the head of the list of potential channels of communication where students are concerned. But the social marketer needs to know where the newspaper stands in the full range of media accessible to students. Surveys and focus groups can tell the campaign planners about the readership of newspapers and magazines and their credibility as sources of information. A radio station may rank higher than the newspaper as an information source on some campuses. Seniors who have been on campus for years may rely on different sources of information than freshmen just arriving. To what extent does information travel by word of mouth through segments of the target audience? If a campaign calls for distributing leaflets, at what locations are they most likely to get into the hands of the target audience?

Mass media offer an opportunity to convey a message through both news stories and paid advertising. Face-to-face communication may be more difficult to organize and carry out, but for many members of a target audience interpersonal contacts may be most effective. Information presented at group sites and through organizations can reinforce and expand upon media messages. Using several different channels will continually reinforce the campaign message, increasing the chance that the audience will be exposed to the information often enough to absorb and remember it.

The Internet, with its World Wide Web, is a communications medium with a potential only now beginning to be realized for health education and social marketing. Computer-based communication is potentially a challenging new avenue for promoting campus prevention and social marketing. For instance, the Alcohol and Other Drug Resource Center at La Salle University in Philadelphia maintains a Website offering information about alcohol and other drugs, a self-assessment questionnaire designed to identify at-risk drinking practices, and sources of help for those who feel they have a substance abuse problem. The anonymity of the Internet may appeal to students otherwise reluctant to reveal their own concern about involvement with drugs.

Believable Information

"The way you deliver a message has to be appropriate for the audience. We did focus groups to discover what students pay attention to—how they get their information. The important thing was to find out where they get believable information."
—Dan Duquette, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse

Call in the Pros? Some Pros and Cons

Can an outside advertising agency lend valuable professional expertise to a campus social marketing campaign? It all depends, judging from experience reported from two campuses.

Bill Zuelke at the University of Portland, Oregon, worked with an ad agency on a campaign to change perceptions of the drinking norm on his campus. Under a $50,000 contract, the agency used focus groups to develop the campaign, pretested materials, and mapped out a saturation media campaign based on a survey finding that the great majority of students—70 percent—did not engage in "binge" drinking.

"We chose an agency with a research arm," says Zuelke. "The agency had done a lot of research and survey work in connection with a program of the Oregon Business Council to determine drinking levels of job applicants and to reduce alcohol use among employees. We learned a lot from the experience of working with these people and could now do another campaign without their help."

Koreen Johannessen, director of health promotion and preventive services at the University of Arizona in Tucson, reports a less satisfying experience with an advertising agency.

"It was quite a long learning curve for the people at the agency. We discovered that they knew how to sell a commercial product—how to get your attention, how to design an ad that gets your eye to the page, and to associate a logo with a product. What they didn't know was how to influence ideas, how to change a knowledge base, how to change a perception. So we discovered right off that social marketing and commercial advertising are two different animals."

She believes the advertising professionals did not do the market research necessary for a successful campus campaign and therefore failed to understand the kinds of messages and images that appeal to the particular campus audience the campaign was supposed to reach. The agency's proposed ads on the "Myths and Realities" of campus drinking norms turned out to sow more confusion than enlightenment. Johannessen and her team eventually took over the preparation of the campaign themselves.

"We had some graduate students working with us, and we sent them out with sample media pieces to get feedback from students around the campus. We needed to figure out what words our students would respond to. When it came to images and graphics, we'd send our people out with pictures to give them the same kind of test."

If an ad agency is going to be involved, says Johannessen, it is important to find one with personnel trained and experienced in social marketing. "We discovered it's possible to over-design an ad. You don't want it to be highly polished, to have too commercial a look. I think the fact that our ads looked like they came from our campus health center meant something to the students. The ads were more credible."

When choosing communication channels, marketers should ask three questions:

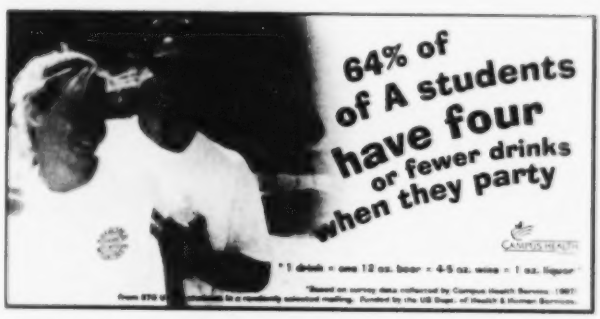
- Which channels are most appropriate for the message and the problem it addresses?
- Which channels are most likely to be credible to and accessible by the target audience?
- Which and how many channels are feasible, considering the schedule and budget?

What Are the Results?

Data gathered before a campaign are essential for measuring its impact later. The Core survey instrument, created by the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University, is a valuable tool for obtaining baseline data about alcohol and other drug use among students. The Core Survey, plus data from surveys or studies designed for a specific campaign, will provide an opportunity to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. Data from campus security offices or police departments in neighboring

University of Arizona

The media team working on a social marketing campaign at the University of Arizona discovered that campaign materials designed by an outside advertising agency looked too "slick" to be taken seriously by students. Responses gathered from interviews and focus groups persuaded the team that ads showing too much of a professional touch were indistinguishable from commercial advertising and likely to be dismissed as such. The team decided to abandon the pictures and concepts provided by the agency in favor of giving their campaign a more home-grown appearance. Instead of carefully posed photos that could have depicted students anywhere, the team hired its own photographer to shoot pictures of students against backgrounds recognizable as the Tucson campus. The ads were considered more believable if they came from an on-campus source.



The social marketing project at the University of Arizona was supported by grant number 1 HD1 SPO 6343 from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the program and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Data gathered before a campaign are essential for measuring the impact of your effort later.

communities are important for measuring any change in violence and crime associated with heavy drinking by students. The requirements for an evaluation of a project should be considered in the planning process *before* the campaign begins.

The evaluation component in a campaign may provide for both process and outcome measures. Process measures assess the implementation of the program's activities. Did the campaign use as many media messages as intended? How many persons participated in responsible beverage service training? How many alcohol-free social events were held on campus? Such questions as these help determine whether the campaign carried out the activities envisioned at the outset. Outcome measures assess the impact of a campaign on the target audience or the environment in which the target audience makes decisions. Did perceptions of alcohol and other drug use change? Did rates of use of alcohol and other drugs change? Were there fewer alcohol-related incidents on campus or in surrounding neighborhoods? These questions help determine whether the campaign achieved its intended results.

Attempting to connect a change in drinking rates with a specific aspect of a comprehensive prevention program can be difficult and should be approached with caution. It is important to differentiate between changes in individual behavior and changes in the drinking environment in assessing the impact of a campaign. Changes in the environment can lead to changes in drinking behavior that are evident only with the passage of time.

Campus groups conducting social marketing campaigns should be prepared to fine-tune their strategies and messages during the course of a campaign, based on feedback from the target audience. Campaign materials that were not thoroughly pretested may miss their target or be interpreted in unexpected ways. Changing a marketing campaign to reflect feedback from consumers in the marketplace is common in the commercial world. Social marketers will often face the same necessity.

Just as marketing messages must be heard repeatedly to be lodged in a consumer's memory and associated with an attractive product, a social marketing campaign will require repetition from year to year to have the desired impact on campus behavior. On some campuses, social marketing efforts to change perceptions of drinking norms have produced evidence that messages about the true rates of campus drinking are being retained by students, but that no change in actual drinking patterns is taking place. One campus prevention leader concluded that it might take four years or more to see a significant change in rates of drinking—sufficient time to target four freshman classes with a social marketing strategy that

corrects misconceptions about drinking norms. "By the time members of the first class are seniors, we'll have given all of the students an accurate perception."

Whom to Involve, What It Takes

The campus environment is the sum total of many influences affecting student use of alcohol and other drugs, some of them with the strength of deeply rooted traditions, some no more than passing fads. The social marketer recognizes that these environmental factors can help or hinder the pursuit of a prevention goal. Pride in the name and academic reputation of an institution can help unite a campus in a campaign attacking a problem that threatens the good standing of the school. On the other hand, a tradition of unrestrained drinking at homecomings and other annual events may have powerful support that impedes prevention. A social marketing strategy seeks to mobilize the sympathetic forces in individuals and the campus community as a whole in support of a prevention goal.

A well-thought-out and realistic social marketing campaign can count on valuable allies from the campus community and beyond. Although it may not be necessary to receive official approval for a campaign, it may be wise to keep administrators informed

Choose Your Channel

There are many channels of communication at the disposal of social marketers. Here are some to be considered:

- face to face (health care professionals, faculty, other students, family members)
- group sites (classrooms, offices, work areas)
- organizational (fraternities and sororities, social clubs, athletic groups)
- mass media (campus newspapers, community newspapers, magazines, the Internet, radio, television, billboards, transit cards)
- campus sites (libraries, student centers, residence halls, common areas)
- off-campus sites (bars and restaurants, malls, government offices, health clinics)

Each channel offers different benefits and may require messages in different formats (although not necessarily different messages).

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University of California

At the University of California at Santa Barbara, students in the Communication Department have been drawn into ongoing participation in a social marketing program for prevention of alcohol and other drug problems. Students in Communication 117 develop and conduct surveys of the student body to design campaign messages based on specific attitudes and behaviors. Topics have included drinking and driving, bicycling under the influence, unsafe sexual behavior, and binge drinking. "By surveying their specific target audience, students learned important things that changed their persuasive messages," says Judy Hearsum, director of the prevention program. "For example, one group that was looking at female African American students found that they didn't drink much, but their African American boyfriends did. So, they altered their message to have the African American women try to prevent their boyfriends from drinking and driving."

The Bicycling Under the Influence project at UCSB demonstrated how a hidden issue can be brought to the surface. "At first students laughed and thought it wasn't a big issue," says Kellerman. "But after researching the projects, talking to police officers, and hearing class presentations, the students decided on their own that it was a serious matter and they should be concerned about it." Success in linking students in Communication 117 to the prevention effort led Hearsum to seek similar cooperation from the Department of Dramatic Art for creating theatrical presentations with a prevention message, and from the campus booking office to develop entertainment events for the alcohol-free nightclub and coffeehouse on the campus.[11]

of the nature of the project, its purpose, and its progress.

Administrators, faculty, and staff can offer counsel and support in both the planning and implementation of a project. Others who might be enlisted include peer educators, members of interfraternity and Panhellenic councils, representatives of a residence hall association and resident assistants, and leaders in honor societies and student government.

Using students as volunteers or paid employees in a prevention effort not only saves money but helps identify the campaign with the student body rather than an outside agency.

Campus chapters of SADD or BACCHUS may also be drawn in. If the intention is to create a program that will be sustained from year to year, it is important to establish a cycle of leadership that will provide experience and know-how in the future.

By assuring the target audience that the objective is to eliminate or reduce an alcohol *problem* and not alcohol use itself, a campaign can attract wide support, even from those who may be identified as part of the problem. Experience in the hospitality industry has shown that owners of bars and restaurants whose intoxicated patrons are a community problem can be convinced of the benefit of server training programs that restrain rates of alcohol consumption by their customers without cutting into their profits. Through responsible hospitality councils they have moved from being a sore point in the community to being perceived as responsible business owners. Wide support can be gained by framing the objectives of a campaign in terms of general benefit to the individual or to an entire group. A campaign based on principles of respect for others can awaken students who drink to the problems they may create for those who do not drink.

Mustering Resources

Major social marketing campaigns in the field of public health have required large budgets for professional services, purchase of media advertising, and evaluation of programs. But campus prevention programs rarely command the resources necessary for such a campaign. Using students as volunteers or paid employees in a prevention effort not only saves money but helps identify the campaign with the student body rather than an outside agency. The opportunity to cast a broad net for participants in a campaign is limited only by the size of the campus. A large university can hope to enlist expertise and volunteers from departments with specialists in communications, advertising, public relations, and other skills adaptable to social marketing.

Sociology, marketing, and public health departments may provide guidance or even volunteers for conducting focus groups, interviews, and evaluations. Artwork can be produced in art departments, perhaps with the inducement of prizes for designs or images accepted for use in the campaign. If such talent is not available on the campus, commercial agencies in the surrounding community may be persuaded to

donate their professional time.

Seeking sponsorships or other support in the way of cash or in-kind contributions from community business firms is another tactic in campaign budgeting. Restaurants, fast-food chains, bookstores, and other merchants who do business with students can be a source of donations. So can organizations such as civic clubs, chambers of commerce, or local chapters of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Finally, grant programs of federal, state, and local governments and philanthropic and corporate foundations may offer an avenue for funding. Bear in mind that most agencies working on prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug problems do not accept contributions from the alcohol and tobacco industries.

(See page 34 for estimates of some costs associated with a social marketing campaign.)

Notes

[1] Wechsler, H. et al. *Binge Drinking on American College Campuses: A New Look at an Old Problem.* Harvard School of Public Health, 1995.

[2] Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., and Bachman, J. G. *National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975–1995. Vol. II: College Students and Young Adults.* NIH Publication No. 96-4140. Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1996.

[3] Walsh, D. C. et al. Social marketing for public health. *Health Affairs,* Summer 1993, 104–119; Manoff, R. K. *Social Marketing: New Imperative for Public Health.* New York: Praeger, 1985.

[4] Haines, M., and Spear, S. F. Changing the perception of the norm: A strategy to decrease binge drinking among college students. *Journal of American Collegiate Health,* 134–140, Vol. 45, Nov. 1996.

[5] DeJong, W. *Setting and Improving Policies for Reducing Alcohol and Other Drug Problems on Campus: A Guide for Administrators.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, 1995, Reprinted 1997.

[6] Johnston, op. cit.

[7] Wechsler, op. cit.

[8] Atkin, C. Research evidence on mass mediated health communication campaigns. In Nimmo D. (ed.), *Communication Yearbook (Volume 3).* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1979.

[9] DeJong, W. *Arresting the Demand for Drugs: Police and School Partnerships to Prevent Drug Abuse.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, 1987.

[10] Job, R. Effective and ineffective use of fear in health promotion campaigns. *American Journal of Public Health,* 78:163–167, 1988; Solomon, M., and DeJong, W. Recent sexually transmitted disease prevention efforts and their implications for AIDS health education. *Health Education Quarterly,* 13:301–316, 1986.

[11] See "Getting the Message: Don't Drunk and Bike." *Prevention File,* Vol. II, No. 2, Spring 1996. San Diego: The Silver Gate Group.

Resources

AVAILABLE FROM THE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

Raising More Voices than Mugs: Changing the College Alcohol Environment Through Media Advocacy was published in 1994 by the U.S. Department of Education, with additional funding support from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

AVAILABLE FROM OTHER SOURCES

The U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) has prepared a series of *Technical Assistance Bulletins* useful in developing prevention and social marketing materials. They deal with developing prevention concepts, communication principles, conducting focus groups, pretesting materials, increasing media coverage, and other issues. The bulletins are available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), which can be reached by calling 1-800-729-6686. NCADI's Website at http://www.health.org/— includes a searchable database, online catalog, and downloadable publications.

Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planning Guide was published in 1989 by the Office of Cancer Communications of the National Cancer Institute and contains a wealth of information about planning and implementing health campaigns and designing media messages. Although the publication is out of print and no longer distributed by NCI, it may be available in libraries. The text is available in electronic form from the National Cancer Institute at the following Internet address: http://rex.nci.nih.gov

The Golden Key National Honor Society has prepared an implementation guide for a social norms marketing campaign developed for its chapters. *Just the Facts* is available from the society at 1189 Ponce de Leon Avenue, NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4624, or by calling 1-800-377-2401, ext. 226.

Social Marketing Campaign Some Estimated Costs

EVALUATION

Core Alcohol and Drug Survey

Purchase of each copy	$0.22
Scanning of each returned survey	$0.17
Executive Summary (9 pp. approx.)	$20.00
Abbreviated analysis (50 pp. approx.)	$45.00
Disk with raw data	$13.00

ADVERTISEMENTS

Display Ads

20 display ads @ 30 column inches, @ est. $7/col. in. (Weekly Sept/Oct; Biweekly Nov/Jan; Weekly Feb/Mar)	$4,200

Flyer

5,000 copies of a two-sided flyer on colored paper	$ 410

Poster

5,000 copies of 24 x 36, 2-color poster on glossy stock	$3,200
500 copies of 17 x 22, 4-color poster on glossy stock	$1,600

Designer

Student graphic designer (250 hrs. @ $5.50)	$1,375

Adapted from *A Social Norms Approach to Preventing Binge Drinking at Colleges and Universities*, by Michael P. Haines (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, 1996).

Publications available from ...

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

The following is a partial list of publications available from the Center. To receive a complete list, call us at (800) 676-1730 or check our Website at http://www.edc.org/hec/ to download copies of most of our publications or to place an order for print versions.

- Setting and Improving Policies for Reducing Alcohol and Other Drug Problems on Campus: A Guide for Administrators *(114 pp.)*
- Preventing Alcohol-Related Problems on Campus:
  - Acquaintance Rape: A Guide for Program Coordinators *(74 pp.)*
  - Methods for Assessing Student Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs *(48 pp.)*
  - Substance-Free Residence Halls *(62 pp.)*
  - Vandalism *(8 pp.)*
- College Alcohol Risk Assessment Guide: Environmental Approaches to Prevention *(103 pp.)*
- A Social Norms Approach to Preventing Binge Drinking at Colleges and Universities *(32 pp.)*
- Complying with the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations (34 CFR Part 86): A Guide for University and College Administrators *(36 pp.)*
- Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention: A Bulletin for Fraternity & Sorority Advisers *(16 pp.)*
- Binge Drinking on Campus: Results of a National Study *(8 pp.)*
- Secondary Effects of Binge Drinking on College Campuses *(8 pp.)*
- Designing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs in Higher Education: Bringing Theory into Practice *(292 pp.)*
- Social Marketing Strategies for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems *(32 pp.)*
- Annotated Bibliography: Focus: Environmental Management Strategies (38 pp.)
- Last Call: High-Risk Bar Promotions That Target College Students: A Community Action Guide (from the Center for Science in the Public Interest) (61 pp.)
- Be Vocal, Be Visible, Be Visionary: Recommendations for College and University Presidents on Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (A Report from the Presidents Leadership Group) (58 pp.)

Fact Sheets/ Prevention Updates

- Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Sexual Assault
- College Academic Performance and Alcohol and Other Drug Use
- Alcohol and Other Drug Use Among College Athletes
- Alcohol, Other Drugs, and Interpersonal Violence
- Alcohol Use Among Fraternity and Sorority Members
- Racial and Ethnic Differences in Alcohol and Other Drug Use
- Getting Started on Campus: Tips for New AOD Coordinators
- Responsible Hospitality Service
- Social Marketing for Prevention

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The Higher Education Center For Alcohol And Other Drug Prevention

Our Mission

The mission of the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention is to assist institutions of higher education in developing alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention programs that will foster students' academic and social development and promote campus and community safety.

How We Can Help

The Center offers an integrated array of services to help people at colleges and universities adopt effective AOD prevention strategies. We offer:

- Training and professional development activities
- Resources, referrals, and consultations
- Publication and dissemination of prevention materials
- Support for the Network of Colleges and Universities Committed to the Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Assessment, evaluation, and analysis activities

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Keep up to date with the *Catalyst*. Learn about important developments in AOD prevention in higher education. To receive free copies, ask to be put on our mailing list.

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Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

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